TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

Purposes of This Paper

The purposes of these papers are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church; finance, religious education, community relationships; and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The paper will be an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program," that will encourage a national "rural church movement." The paper will be closely linked with a regularly held National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country.

Contributors

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This Issue
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The Church Goes to the Fair

CARLTON W. SAYWELL

• Pigs, cows, horses, sheep, a noisy midway, roaring auto races, clattering farm machinery, venders calling their wares, a half a million chattering people, all were there. The Town and Country Church was there, too, to speak out for God.

Our Baptist Rural Church Center at the State Fair was acclaimed to be one of the outstanding exhibits. Some forty thousand people stopped to look in through the gothic windows of the lovely little white steepled stone church erected in the Educational Building at the state fair. The hymns of the church beautifully played on the Hammond Organ brought expressions of joy and appreciation as well as tears of memory to the faces of many. Often groups would stand around the organ requesting hymns to be played. The organist willingly stayed over time on several occasions. One fine young man, an instructor at our State Agricultural College at Ames, after listening to the organ for nearly an hour one day, asked your Director if the organist would play "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning." She played it gladly and the Town and Country Director sang it for him, too. Thousands came in and sat down—some with heads bowed, while others fixed their gaze on the beautiful Sallman's Head of Christ around which the worship center was built. Nearly two thousand signed the guest book. Many of all denominations told me that they prayed for the Town and Country Church. They prayed that the rural church might have power and vision to do a better job in Iowa and across the nation for our Lord and Saviour.

Scrap Books and Pictures

Forty odd churches sent scrap books and pictures to be put on display. Church after church said, "Why didn't we think of making a scrap book before. We now have a splendid permanent record of our church work and we plan to add to it each year." A number of churches wrote, saying, "We did not have time to get our scrap book started this year but you can count on us for next year." At least six of the pastors said, "The scrap book project has been one of the most unifying projects our church has ever attempted." The pastor of a new parish just organized from an open country Baptist Church and an open country Moravian Church enthusiastically declared, "Working together on this scrap book has worked wonders in helping my people to get acquainted and to get them working together as one parish."

Beautifully spotlighted on the back wall of the little rural church were six Iowa Town and Country Churches cut out of plywood and painted by an art teacher who is a member of one of our rural churches. These churches showed the progress made in architecture through the years from the little log cabin church of 1834 to a lovely modern dream church beautifully landscaped that is yet to be built.

One of our churches more than a hundred miles away furnished fresh flowers for the booth by special delivery mail each day. A layman from this church said afterwards: "It really did something for the church members to know that they had a definite part in this venture for Christ."

Literature Distributed

Approximately 25,000 pieces of Christian literature were given away. Several thousands of tracts with titles such as "What Is A Christian," "What Baptists Believe," and many others including the attractive new youth pamphlets published for the B. Y. F. program were distributed. While looking at the literature one high school girl was heard to say to another, "I never figured there was much to this Christianity business, but I think I will take some of this stuff and read it and see what it's all about." The three excellent pamphlets on "The Christian Farmer" published by our Convention were given out by the thousands and people really took them home. Not more than two or three were seen discarded in the halls during the entire time of the fair.

Each day a different rural pastor and his wife cared for the booth. To see people acclaiming the rural church and stopping by the thousands to listen to the music of the church did something for Shepherd and Shepherdess alike. Yes, it was a long day answering questions, greeting people and encouraging them to share in the good things in store for them inside. But all who helped said at the close of each day, "It was wonderful. Thank you for letting us help."

A Great Service Rendered

Sunday morning, a group of 4H group exhibitors came asking if it would be possible for them to have a Sunday School in the booth. The minister of the day happily shared with the boys and girls and some adults a lesson on the Shepherd's Psalm. Surely, this was most applicable for the occasion for some of those present were exhibiting sheep at the fair.

Two radio stations asked for special interviews and one of the stations brought its equipment right into the booth so that it might have the organ play hymns as a background. Personal words of appreciation came from numerous other exhibitors including the Red Cross, Boy Scouts of America, Public Schools and State Colleges. The Des Moines daily paper, the Register, which goes out all over the state, made special mention of the booth on its front page.

Baptist rural church morale has been definitely lifted in Iowa. Town and Country Churches are more conscious than ever before that they do count tremendously in the on-going program of our Master. But more important than this, seed has been sown. Christ and his way of life have been lifted up before the people. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

Episcopal Rural Church Advance

• The General Convention of the Episcopal Church has given a mandate to its national officers to make a definite rural Church advance and has voted an appropriation of $60,000 per year during the next Triennium to be used solely for a rural field service program. This is in addition to the regular educational and promotional appropriation for rural work. The total rural budget of the Episcopal Church is allocated to twelve continuing and new projects within the Division of Domestic Missions under the direction of the Rev. Clifford L. Samuelson, national rural office of the Episcopal Church. These project headings include: (1) national and regional Church conferences during the summers at colleges, (2) town and country institutes held in seminaries, (3) southern leadership training school in mountain areas, (4) student field service in strategic places, (5) rural study scholarships for colleges, (6) lectureships on rural work in seminaries, (7) inter-church cooperation in the rural field, (8) the opening of 10 new fields for rural church work, (9) surveys of dioceses to determine where assistance in rural work should be given, (10) travel expenses of department workers, (11) and new evangelistic efforts.

"Excellency"?

THOMAS CLAYBORNE

• A few days back I attended a dinner where people discussed, "What is the future of the Rural Church." The tables happened to be arranged so they formed the letter "E." It reminded the leader of the Army and Navy "Excellency" awards. The Secretary of the State Council of Churches was reminded of the Emergency rural people were now facing. As the evening wore on and the talk became more "earthy," a fifty-year-old farmer ventured forth. He observed that the "E" reminded him of Eternal. In his judgment, Religious worship was just as eternal as his land. As long as humans inhabited the "Good Earth" they would always till land and worship God. But the permanence must not stop improvement in either farming or the rural church.

How well would the farm family live today if they farmed it the way they did it in 1930? Who wants to ask his wife and children to live in 1946; based on hand haying, no hybrid corn, steel wheeled tractors, horse drawn sprayers, and twice a day milking by hand? Just try it and see how many of the boys stay on the farm, or how many girls go to college. The farm wife won't see the dentist twice a year, nor will she have a permanent every two months either. It just cannot be done. If a family stays in farming today, they must make changes, make them quickly, and not make too many mistakes in choices either.

Then my farm friend went on to state that the same train of thought applied to the development of the religious Rural Parish. Changes in management should be made, techniques must advance. The rural Pastor was hired to call them. But if the group were honestly discussing "The Future of the Rural Church," the countryman had given them something to think about.

• "A harvest is reaped in order that it may be consumed. Its purpose is to furnish life for humanity at home and abroad."

—*Thomas L. Bailey,*
Governor of Mississippi

Cortland Community Churches' Office

WILLIAM ROUSH

• A unique venture into community cooperation began one day as the two ministers of the Cortland, Ohio, churches played golf with the village banker and the village school principal. Out of their discussion of village problems came a Civic Club, organized for the purpose of furthering the interests of the village in all lines. As a function of that club, the two ministers, George Van Wingerden and Leonard R. Dittman, were appointed a committee to promote affairs of community interest. The first project of the committee was a "Community Men's Meeting" held in one of the churches, with an outstanding speaker who discussed the plight of the European nations after the war. The meeting was a huge success.

At about this time, a highly civic minded individual presented the two ministers with a sizable fund with which to continue the community projects, and there followed in rapid succession a community sing, a community youth night, a community moving picture, and another men's meeting.

As these affairs were being planned, the two ministers found themselves thrown together quite often, and the inconvenience of two persons working on the same project from two different headquarters became evident. Then one day at a pastor's convention one of them remarked that it would be convenient if they had an office from which to carry on the community work. They thought of an abandoned office on the main street of the village, and in their minds they planned the Community Churches' Office.

Organization

When they returned from the convention, the ministers called a joint meeting of the official boards of the two churches, presented their ideas and received enthusiastic approval. A committee was appointed to draw up plans of organization and management of the community churches' office. This committee decided that a board of five members should direct the work and subsequently each church elected two members and these four elected a fifth. It is the duty of this board to provide the facilities for the two ministers to carry on their community work. The project was underwritten financially by the two churches. Office space, furniture, equipment, and labor were donated. Financing has not been a problem thus far.

The office itself occupies the second floor of a small building on the main street of town and is composed of four rooms: one for each minister, a large conference room for meetings, and a storage room. Its equipment includes the essential desks and chairs, a mimeograph, a multigraph, a hand printing machine and an addressograph. The ministers are in their offices at stated times and conduct all their work from the offices. A part-time secretary takes care of routine clerical matters.

Convenient Meeting Place

The community activities conducted by and through the C. C. O., as we like to call it, and the benefits derived by the community from the C. C. O., are so numerous that any listing of them is bound to be incomplete. The offices themselves have become a community meeting place. Small groups such as the Lions, the Boy Scout Council, the civic club, youth groups, and committees of all kinds now have a convenient meeting place. Individuals can see the "preacher" about their problems without invading the privacy of the minister's home. Letters and announcements, formerly a problem of preparation and distribution, now go out by the hundreds to members of the churches and to other groups. Bulletins, letters, announcements, and stationery are all printed right in the office.

Programs for Everyone

During the past winter a community meeting of some kind was held every other Sunday: a movie, a community sing, a men's meeting, or a youth night. In March, a youth week was held in which a program for the community young people was presented every evening. During the

Rev. George Van Wingerden
Pastor of the Christian Church

Lenten season an excellent speaker was engaged to bring the messages in a combined church service each evening for a week. The best Memorial Service ever held in Cortland was presented by the C. C. O. last May. For two weeks following the close of school, a Community Bible School was conducted by the two ministers and a volunteer staff, using school facilities, including busses. The Bible School had over two hundred of the community's three hundred children enrolled.

Cooperation

When Rev. Van Wingerden took a month's vacation in July, his Christian congregation met with the Methodists. When Rev. Dittman took a month's vacation in August, his Methodist congregation met with the Christians. These combined church services resulted in an increase of thirty per cent in attendance over last summer's attendance at separate services. The height of cooperation came one day when a couple came to see Rev. "Van" about plans for their coming marriage. The Christian minister was out of town, so Rev. Dittman made all the arrangements for the ceremony and Rev. "Van" got back just in time to perform the marriage. How they divided the fee we'll never know, for they won't tell.

Plans for the Future

The Cortland C. C. O. is proud of its accomplishments, but progress has not stopped. Plans are in the making for a Bible class in the school this year, a series of programs on the community forum order, an evening adult recreation program, a community Christmas program, and many others. The projects already begun will be continued.

The Cortland Community Churches' Office was begun with some fear of its acceptance by the people, but its success has been gratifying beyond all expectations. Its success has been made possible by the fine cooperation of its two long-term ministers, one having been in the village thirteen years, the other seven. Too much cannot be said for the spirit of cooperation and helpfulness displayed by the membership

Rev. Leonard R. Dittman
Pastor of the Methodist Church

of the two churches, and the village people in general. Paul Harris, noted lecturer and traveler, when he visited the community and learned about the C. C. O., expressed our thoughts very well when he said: "The world could learn a lesson in cooperation from Cortland. You have in Cortland a simple answer to the most perplexing world problems:—cooperation. When the people all over the world, of all races and religions, can learn to do things together as the people of Cortland have done, peace and happiness will be assured."

"Down with the Rent"!

A Page from History

• Country doctors were among the leaders of the anti-rent farmer movements that shook upstate New York and forced constitutional changes in 1846. The preachers generally favored the patroons in a long struggle between small farmers and large landlords.

The Dutch small farmers of several counties had been long dissatisfied with the conditions imposed by Dutch patroons and their English successors. The patroon purchased land from the Indians, and, in turn, held baronial authority. But the hunger for land among the small farmers eventually ended the baronial system.

Smith A. Boughton was the country doctor who became the hero of those who agitated for changes in the land tenure system. Extreme measures were deemed necessary. Dr. Boughton became "Big Thunder" who led groups of Dutch farmers disguised as Indians, who suddenly appeared at sheriff sales and drove bidders away, among other activities.

Country doctors eventually became the spearhead of movements that threatened the landlords' security. The state legislature in 1840 appointed a committee to investigate land tenure. Subsequent legislatures did likewise, with no practical result. William H. Seward, the Whig leader, and Samuel J. Tilden, of the Democrats, were among the few who understood the issue.

Finally Tilden headed a legislative committee in 1846 which resulted in laws outlawing the seizure and sale of tenant property for nonpayment of rent. Then came the constitutional convention of 1846, which approved a new basic law embodying substantial relief for tenants. There could be no more leases of the feudal type; there could be no farm lease for more than 12 years; there could be no more restraints on transfers of title.

Tilden declared in 1846 that successful husbandry demanded a sense of complete ownership of land. Political infiltration eventually convinced the leaders of all parties that the people generally were with the small farmers. But at times the issues were very much confused. James Fennimore Cooper, the novelist, consistently denounced the farmers. Even the gray poet of democracy, Walt Whitman, publicly opposed their methods.

—(From Tin Horns and Calico, by Henry Christman, New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1945)

Town & Country Church

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The Reincarnation of F. S. A.

WILLIAM W. BIDDLE

• On November 1, the Farm Security Administration officially ceased to exist. But its soul goes marching on in a new organization—the Farmers Home Administration. Such is the effect of the new legislation passed in the closing days of the last Congress and signed by President Truman, August 14.

Long known as the champion of the disadvantaged family-type farmer, FSA has had an uncertain nine-year existence due to lack of basic legislation. The agency was created by Executive Order in 1937 and had been granted Congressional recognition only in annual appropriation bills. It is now given permanent status as the backbone of a new organization with clearly defined functions and a potentially expanding program.

The Farmers Home Administration Act of 1946 merged two lending programs of the Department of Agriculture, the FSA and the Emergency Crop and Feed Loan Division of the Farm Credit Administration. Loans granted by the latter were smaller, purely emergency loans, contrasted to the carefully planned and budgeted credit advanced by FSA in its rehabilitation loans. The two are now combined to provide credit up to five years for living and operating items which will contribute to a farm family's long-run success. Combined with this is the friendly guidance or supervision which has made FSA credit different from cold-blooded "loan-it-and-collect-it" organizations.

Help for Farmers

Long-term credit to purchase, repair, and make permanent improvements on farms continues. These loans at 3½ per cent interest can run up to 40 years. Added to this is an entirely new feature whereby the Government will guarantee 90% of the face value of similar loans made by banks as soon as Congress provides the "insurance" funds. The servicing, collections, and helpful supervision will be provided by the new F.H.A. Bankers will become co-operators in the program rather than indignant bystanders as they have sometimes been in the past. This new development can double the number of struggling farmers helped to farm ownership. The loans can now be used to buy farms up to a price determined by the average of *efficient* family-type farm-management units in the county or locality. It will be possible to start a farm family off on a sounder economic foundation.

Committees of three county citizens continue to determine eligibility of farmers for help. One committee member out of three may be a non-farmer. Is this an opportunity for rural ministers to be of real service to their communities?

Reorganization

Camps for migrant farm labor and resettlement projects are to be liquidated. No loans to cooperatives or to borrowers for joining cooperatives are allowed. But every encouragement is offered for farmers to work together in improving their lot and that of their community.

The already existing excellent services to farmer veterans will be continued. A special new feature is added whereby a disabled veteran may be financed on a property which is less than a full producing unit by taking his pension into consideration as part income.

Continuity of a liberal, forward-looking program is assured by Pres-

ident Truman's appointment of FSA Chief D. B. Lasseter as head of the new agency. Final details of reorganization will be made known in the near future but no change in local office locations or services to farmers will be made immediately.

With a new name and expanded functions, F.H.A. should be even more helpful to farm families and rural communities than F.S.A. has been. The cooperation of rural churches is needed for maximum usefulness.

"The Learned Blacksmith"

A Page from History

• In the Berkshire Mountains of Western Massachusetts is a tablet erected to commemorate the achievements of Elihu Burritt, who, while working at the forge studied mathematics, ancient and modern languages and world history, and became known as "the learned blacksmith." In 1846 he organized the League of Universal Brotherhood, which soon had members in Europe and the United States. He edited *The Christian Citizen,* a weekly emphasizing peace, anti-slavery, temperance and self-education. He advocated cheap international postal rates. He made pleas for a Congress and Court of Nations. He organized a system for exchange of "friendly speeches" between people in the United States and England. He frequently wrote chronicles of his walking trips throughout New England. He lived 1810-79. In 1846 he published one of his widely read books *Sparks from the Anvil.*

Ministers and Soil Conservation

MILTON HEITZMAN

• Ford County, Illinois, is known for its rich land and good crops. The churches of this agricultural county are nearly all small village churches and are especially interested in the main product of the land—the people. Knowing this, the leadership of the Soil Conservation District—Gilbert Dueringer of Melvin, Illinois, and George Reed—decided to do something about it.

Cooperating with Milton Heitzman, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Melvin; Rev. R. M. Luede, pastor of the Christian Church of Gibson City; and a priest, Father C. B. Motsett of Gibson City, plans were laid for a ministers' Conservation Day.

New Type of Education

Meeting in the morning at an abandoned school the ministers received their induction into a new area of thinking—loss of soil means loss of people. A short lecture by Morris Fonda, Educational Director of the SCS, pointed out that throughout the tour the ministers were to be "on the lookout for poor communities resulting from poor land use, and also good communities as a result of good land use." This fact was soon seen as the caravan started on its tour of several miles through a territory not too faintly reminiscent of the Bad Lands of the Dakotas. Light sub-soil, rolling terrain, and selfish use had destroyed all of the productive potential.

This was the worst. From this part of Ford County the caravan continued, stopping now and then to view a grass waterway, contour strip cropping, or some other good farm practice. At the farm of George S. Roberts, the ministers heard the first-hand report of a farmer with foresight who bought a piece of land at a ridiculously low price. Using Conservation practices he is now getting that land back into production. During this part of the tour many of the ministers raised questions showing their keen interest in a vital subject and their hunger for fuller knowledge. Especially important to them was the nutritional side of this program where good health and abundant living were being promoted by the Soil Conservation Service.

At noon the ladies of the First Methodist Church served a banquet and the tour continued to the Dueringer Dairy Farm. Here the ministers received the full impact of unselfishness in treatment of the soil. The group walked out on the rich green pastures of the farm and looked down the slope where a large herd of Guernsey cattle was cropping the brome-alfalfa mixture. For the first time many of these ministers and priests pulled up stalks of Brome grass and were shown the tiny letter "M" on its blade. They were jokingly told that the letter stood for the word "Money" and as they looked about the fine, well-equipped farm they could easily believe it. Here was the same kind of soil which they had seen in the morning, the same light sub soil, the same rolling terrain and yet good practice had kept it for the future—bad practice would have ruined it. A minister's job is more than preaching on Sunday when sin ravages even the land.

Relationship of the Church to the Land

But the best was yet to come. The tour went from the fields to the dairy barn on that farm. There, seated on bales of brome grass and alfalfa, the Ford County ministers and priests heard Dr. Burlison of the Extension Service of the University of Illinois challenge the rural ministry with their debt to the farmers of Illinois. They also heard Morris Fonda tell of the relationship of the minister to the land and how important this relationship is to all concerned. Several of the ministers and priests commented on the problem in general and their conclusions were all of the same mind. A rural minister has a responsibility of educating men for their responsibility to the land—the future of America depends upon it.

This type of meeting was enthusiastically accepted by ministers and was easily promoted. The Soil Conservation Service and the Extension Service of the University were thrilled to see such participation by ministers whom they once thought were complacent. Realizing that it is not complacency but ignorance, these groups are now planning work with teachers as well as ministers, educating them to the needs of a fuller understanding of the problems of the farmer.

Social Creatures

• C. R. McBride, Director of the Collecting Center for Heifers for Relief at Green Lake, Wisconsin, and Editor of the *Baptist Bulletin,* writes:

"A few weeks ago it was necessary to remove one heifer from the herd for examination. Since the veterinarian was to inspect her early in the morning, your editor was at the pasture shortly after six o'clock, believe it or not! His intentions were to drive this particular heifer into the corral and then shut the gate and await the arrival of the 'vet.'

"It was a simple matter to start her in the direction of the corral and for a hundred yards or so she went along peacefully. She soon noticed, apparently, that the rest of the herd was not with her. Right then and there that bovine mind decided that either the herd went with her or she did not go. No amount of persuasion, and no amount of driving could avail to direct her to the corral. She intended to remain with the herd, and remain she did!

"Your editor tried another tactic. He attempted to drive the entire herd into the corral. This he did with ease, and soon had the desired heifer penned by herself.

"People are not different, in some respects, from members of the bovine family. They do like to associate with one another. They do like to move in groups. They like to do things together. They like the feel of companionship no matter how much they insist on being individuals.

"Herein lies a lesson for the country pastor. As long as he tries to deal with his people only as individuals his progress is certain to be limited. He is going to be keenly disappointed when individuals fail him by returning to the practices of the group with which they associate. At the end of his ministry he probably will see little progress.

"But let him begin to work with the group, and with wisdom and tact try to direct the thinking of the group, the neighborhood, or the community, and after a while he will be rewarded by the entire number quietly entering his corral.

"The Christian movement is weak today, in part, because we have concentrated upon the individual to the exclusion of the group. The day in which we live surely calls for a new strategy."

An Invocation or Prayer

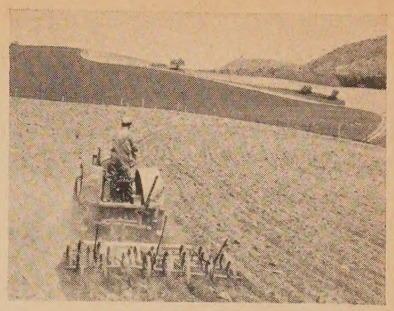
From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men—
The purpose which the Master knows and serves.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out.
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

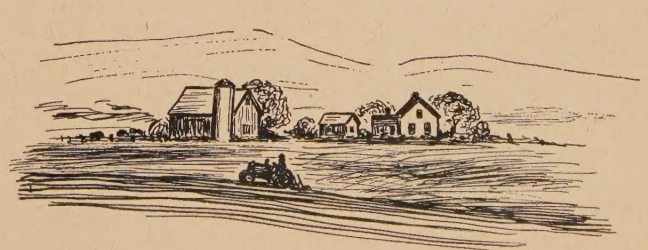


Sermon Dust

• Why not try your hand at some rural exegesis? We would like to start a column which would be helpful in the preparation of sermons which have a major rural emphasis in the interpretation of the Gospel. In talking with a number of church leaders about this, they expressed the opinion that such a column would render a significant service.

Why don't you help by sharing with others some of your insights? Select a text and write a paragraph or two on how the central concept is related to rural life.

Genesis 1:2—"the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep." The American revised version carries a footnote in which the passage is made to read: "the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the deep." Picture a setting hen brooding upon her nest of eggs and you have a good rural-life simile. Out of "waste and void" God brought forth a dwelling place and man to dwell therein. The eternal God is still our refuge, and broods upon us to bring forth new life. If we don't respond favorably—well, what happens to an egg which doesn't hatch? —D.F.P.



Book Reviews

Rural Life and the Church, by David E. Lindstrom. Published by The Garrard Press, Champaign, Illinois, 1946.

This is a revision of the author's earlier work, "The Church in Rural Life," released in 1939. If you are looking for a readable treatise on rural life in the United States, this is it. For those who are not versed in sociology it will fill an important place as an introduction to the general issues which confront rural life. It is crowded with orientational materials consisting of some statistics, names, purposes and functions of groups and organizations, and the history of movements and legislation. There is no technical social research in the book but numerous references are made to such.

Perhaps it is unfair to criticize the book from a churchman's point of view but since it deals with the church, I think not. As a social institution the church was considered but not with the same scientific objectivity applied to other institutions. All who love the Church want the soundest facts that can be gathered, and are not afraid to face whatever situation may be revealed. The book gave me the feeling that the Church should not be touched by serious investigation. It is portrayed as a foundation, stable and sure, worthy of every consideration, but lifeless. This may be the position of the Church but it is not all of the Church. The great Christian imperative—the good news of a way of life which means salvation—is lacking. Can we understand rural life in America today if we do not understand the immeasurable impetus given to it by the Christian imperative which gave so much purpose to the settlement of the western world? Can the historic ideals for American life be fulfilled without the Church?

No one knowing rural life is ignorant of the lethargy and irrelevancy which too often dominates the church program, but Christianity has an urgent sense of immediacy—destruction is imminent, a way of redemption is at hand. The Church has influenced many issues in rural life by the exercise of the Christian imperative. It must do so again and now on the vital issue which faces rural life, but there is little of this in the book.—D.F.P.

Christian Youth and the Rural Task, published by the United Christian Youth Movement, 203 N. Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois. 28 pages. 20c.

This pamphlet is a manual, the purpose of which is to stimulate and guide Christian youth to action which will be rewarded by improved church and community life. It is not for training in Christian doctrine. It will be of particular value to united youth groups, such as the youth departments of councils of churches or community councils.

It has brief suggestions of projects and a good listing of addresses where additional information can be attained.

Rural Community Living and Changing Social Frontiers. The findings of a Seminar conducted by the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church. 60 pages.

This pamphlet is crammed with information and suggestions which fit admirably under the title. As a compilation of significant data it should receive wide use by those who do not have time for or access to the original sources. Most of all it reveals that there is a problem with which leaders are struggling. That we do not have the answer seems apparent to me after giving careful thought to both the background material and the report of the Workshop on "The Christian World View of Rural Life." They are objective but the depth of concern, the warmth of fellowship and the saving grace which characterized early Christianity is not too evident.

Our Native Land, available from your Firestone Dealer.

A number of farm implement companies have been producing pamphlets which emphasize the importance of soil conservation and improved agricultural methods. OUR NATIVE LAND is such a pamphlet. The tabloid style makes it popular while presenting a sound text illustrated by Soil Conservation Service photographs. Even the busiest rural pastor has time for this and it will help immensely to keep him informed.

The Rural Church and Emory University, a supplementary bulletin of Emory University, Georgia, Volume 31, No. 5.

This 32-page pamphlet contains excerpts from speeches delivered at the School for Town and Country Ministers, held last June. It includes a copy of the program and remarks by those who attended as to its value. There are a large number of pictures showing the men at work and about the campus.

It is hoped that some other schools, opening short courses for town and country ministers, will consider this as a good means of promotion.

Whither Rural Youth. A symposium, written by older youth. 32 pages, 20c, from Rural Youth of U.S.A., 734 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

The writers of this pamphlet face the old problem of adjusting human life to the problems it faces in the community. On first impression, it seems that one is supposed to grasp the significance of massive world problems. It is quite refreshing, therefore, when the latter half of the pamphlet is given over to "some starting points." These are lively suggestions, illustrated by actual experiences of what can be done for the welfare of rural youth. This pamphlet should prove most helpful—both to youth leaders and to those who plan programs for youth activity.

• "American Protestantism faces a period of steady decline in strength unless plans are inaugurated promptly for the revival of rural religion and the reconstruction of the rural church throughout the nation."

—*Walter S. Davison,*
Auburn Seminary